643 and the kuan-shih. Since the t'ou-mu does not speak Chinese, he
624 has a Chinese secretary to deal with the district officials, with whom he communicates through an interpreter. The t'ou-mu appoints the kuan-shih and discharges them if they are not qualified. The kuan-shih are not paid. Everyone is obliged to accept the post of kuan-shih if appointed by the t'ou-mu. Length of office is not determined; it runs between one to three years. The kuan-shih must help the t'ou-mu carry out his duties. For example, they are sent by him to some tent community to conduct inquiries in legal matters, such as to investigate a plunder. The tent communities do not have a special local council.

643 The chief duties of the t'ou-mu are the following: He regulates
701 the distribution of pastureland, and determines when the nomads
648 are to move from one pasture to another. The oatfields in the region of the winter pasturelands are the property of the t'ou-mu and are distributed by him. Rent, usually in the form of butter, must be paid him for the oatfields. He is the war lord of the tribe, and as such he can recruit eligible men for military service, /77/ likewise mounts and pack animals (horses and yaks). In case of war he must
643 put his soldiers at the disposal of the t'u-szu of Labrang. He and
651 his sub-chiefs must collect the taxes levied by the Chinese govern-
648 ment on the Fantzu, and hand them over to the district official of Hsia-ho. I could not ascertain whether the t'ou-mu withholds a certain sum for himself from the taxes he collects. The t'ou-mu must also put mounts and pack animals at the disposal of the Chinese district official when the latter or one of his subordinates travels
643 through the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu. The t'ou-mu has the
681 same prerogatives as an incarnation, in that he can demand a ninefold indemnity if he has been robbed. The t'ou-mu also has the privilege of donating the largest branch of a bush and a particularly long dart for the obo at the obo festival.

From what we have said about the position and authority of the t'ou-mu, it follows that he and his officials do not have a particularly great influence on the members of a tribe. We have also mentioned the fact that the individual tent communities do not
618 have regular chieftains. As far as I could ascertain, the clan does not have a great influence in the social and judicial life. There are no clan chieftains like the Chinese tsu-ch'ang.

376 On the other hand, certain societies have formed which are given the general name of ts'aowa (1) and whose chief function

1. Ekvall 4), page 69, briefly mentions these societies

and calls them "thsuba." I give the pronunciation of my Chinese interpreter. 575

seems to be to provide legal protection. The ts'aowa of the Mewu nomads consists of four groups. There are 40 to 100 families or tents in one ts'aowa group. Each group chooses its own council. There are no rules about the length of time the council of a ts'aowa group is in office The t'ou-mu cannot influence the choice of such a ts'aowa council. The individual ts'aowa groups are named /78/ after their councils. The power of each group within the tribe varies, and thus a certain family often strives to shift from a less influential group to a more influential one; they can do this by presenting the group council and several respected members of the group with a sheep and several chin of wine and inviting them to a meal. The group council, together with the entire group, is responsible for every crime committed by one of its members. It carries on negotiations with the council of another ts'aowa group if one of its members is obliged to pay a penalty to the members of another group for some crime, and the council must exact the penalty from the criminal and give it to the council of the other ts'aowa group. If a member of one ts'aowa group cannot pay the penalty demanded of him, the entire group guarantees to raise the fine. The condemned person must then gradually pay off the debt to the members of his group. The ts'aowa group can oust a criminal who they find is a burden to them, and the only thing left for him in that case is to join another group. I could not find out to what extent this is possible. Apparently there are never disagreements between the t'ou-mu and a ts'aowa group or its council about verdicts and penalties.

Legal matters. During my brief sojourn among the Mewu-Fantzu it was, of course, impossible for me, because of my ignorance of the language, to form a definite opinion about their character. This was all the more impossible because the Mewu-Fantzu, to begin with, have a grudging attitude toward a stranger. I had to spend considerable time talking to them on general topics before I could ask more detailed questions about their way of life, even though they knew my interpreter and did not dislike him. I should therefore like to insert here only a few statements of my interpreter who judged the Fantzu from the point of view of a simple, but intelligent Chinese /79/ trader, and who, of course, unwittingly made comparisons with the Chinese conditions of life under which he grew up. I did feel, however, that he made an effort to be neutral in his

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